SHORT-DURATION DISCUSSION

Need for review of Foreign Policy of India (contd.)

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: Madam, I am grateful to the hon. Members for the debate that was held on the 3rd December, 1996. It was so useful and good not only for the House but also for the nation to understand the dimensions of the foreign policy. I think the debate that was addressed by various hon. members from various parties, tried to look at the contours of the foreign policy, and I think it is very important for us to keep in mind that all those issues which confront us, were highlighted so well. Let me first spell out the framework and the postulates that determine India's foreign policy. The freign policy of India, in the contemporary era of the post-cold war period, is making an effort to look at the present situation the world over, and what is happening around us, and try to co-link it with the legacy that we have of the freedom struggle, along with the vision of future that we have for the next century. Fifty years ago. We had the great privilege of participating in the nation which was building a republic for itself.

And I think we have every reason to feel proud of it, the way Indian democracy has consolidated itself in this half a century and the way our system is prospering. At the same time, in these 50 years, we have also built some legacies, and the legacies are the foreign policies which were started by the great Nehru whose name we hold in great reverence. My friend, Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, may not be very happy about it, but my friend, Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, was not happy about Gandhiji also. But that does not make any differnce, so far as the historical growth of this nation is concerned. The legacy is grying to correlate, as I said, as to what is going to happen in the next century itself. We have seen post-cold war era. There are several new challenges which are emerging before the world and our nation is no exception. We are also seeing at the same time that the world order, which some powers are trying to spell out after the cold war, is having challenges for us. We have seen that in these days hegemonism is coming once again before us. We are also seeing that those who think that they have the power to build the new order, have a great deal of disdain for all of us; they have disdain for the third-world, they have disdain for those who were not there in their midst when they were trying to build their own nations, and, therefore, they are trying to build up some exclusive system for themselves. There are several forums, several exclusive clubs. One exclusive club is a Club of P-5, those who are nuclear weapon powers. There is another exclusive club which goes by the name G-7 and G-7 is a monopoly of the economy, of those who want to dominate from economic strength. Soemtimes we see that there are contradictions among themselves, and I will refer to only one which I have seen today and that, I think, is very interesting, that although these powers, that be, who are trying to monopolise a new world order, are now seeing that there are cracks amongst themselves also. If those of you, friends, who had an opportunity of looking at today's *Herald Tribune,* for instance, would have seen that in the discussion that was going on in the European Security Conference in Lisbon, we have new found that the unanimity that they were trying to present is no more available. We have seen that Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia rejected the view of the type of disarmament they were spelling out. He said, "That enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation would create a new and dangerous fault line between East and West at a time when the Continent should be striving to heal the old breach." he also added: "It is not clear that the appearance of a new dividing line would lead to the worsening of the whole geo-political situation." This is another dimension that these people are facing. All the same, in some areas we

have noticed that when it comes to us, they present a different type of unity, and their unity is often at our cost . Therefore, when we think in terms of unclear powers, we also think in terms of the attitude they have about the non-nuclear powers. These are powerful people; they want that all those forums and all those institutions which were built with effort ever since the decolonisation began, and ever since the new countries became free, the platforms that they have built, should be demolished. One such platform is the NAM platform. I have been several Members referring to NAM here and saying that NAM is irrelevant. I think that is exactly what these powers want us to believe, and we will be playing at their hands, if we start feeling that G-5 is relevant, G-7 is relevant, P-5 is relevant but NAM is not relevant, NAM will continue to be relevant so long as they all have one interest to represent and that interest is the interest of the deprived, the interest of the ex-colonies. It is not a bloc. Therefore, sometimes, in our dismay, we start feeling that since so and so did not vote for us, then why form it! It is a sort of platform of all those who—I said, and I repeat—went through the colonisation and also suffered at the hands of those who are ex-imperial powers. Therefore, we have to keep their unity together. Often we have also been told that the types of things which they are trying to present to us—I mean the powerful ones—are the treaties which are taking the countries of the world in one direction. As I have said earlier in the House, it is a charade. One such charade is what is called the NPT. Another charade is what is called the CTBT. Who defines these treaties? The NPT was signed. We did not sign. I think, for correct principled reasons we refused. We felt it was an unequal treaty. We felt it was soemthing which did not really mean to stop proliferation. Then who defines it? Who performs the test? Those very people who have signed the treaties started testing again almost the day after signing the treaty. The same is the case with CTBT. Who defines the CTBT? This must be kept in mind all the time. Therefore, when we think in terms of a nuclear power, we must keep in mind this angle that the deception of CTBT and NPT is something which is being inflicted on us. Take industrial economy. What is happening to industrial economy? I think my friend, Mr. Chidambaram, would kindly recall that all those who are trying to give us a new economic order, they try to spell it in the name of Dunkel Award. We had discussed the Dunkel Award at length in the House and also the WTO's new constitution. We had our doubts and we had our suspicions. I had the privilege, Madam, sitting on those benches, of chairing the Committee which examined in details the GATT. When we examined the GATT we said that though we were joining it we should always be vigilant.

Some of my friends asked as to what is our line at the Singapore meeting. About the Singapore meeting I can assure you one thing. The Government of India's Cabinet has taken a decision that so far as our vital interests are concerned, if any nontrade elements are being introduced, India shall take a firm stand on it. I can assure you one thing that under no circumstances shall India give in. When we talk in terms of CTBT or when we talk in terms of NPT or economy or anyting, the foremost interest that we have to safeguard is our own interest and that interest—we have an enlightened self-interest—we know, is our future and, therefore, when we take some stand we shall abide by it. It was in this context, therefore, that whenever CTBT came we were trying to see, written on the wall, that our legacy was beckoning us to respond and that legacy's beckoning was, please preserve your independence, preserve the independence of the Indian foreign policy and face with courage and also with fortitude all those challenges which are trying to bend us. We are not a very arrogant nation. We never say that we want confrontation. In the last 50 years or so various Prime Ministers have

occupied these benches, from Jawaharlal Nehru to Atal Behari Vajpayee, who occupied it for a brief period. I think one of the things which is always evident is India's grit to stand up when challenges are there before us. In this context, therefore, when we reacted to the CTBT we were reacting in the correct sense. I must say again, which I have said earlier, that when unitedly we refused to sign the CTBT that was the hour of India's glory. Yet many people told us that we would be isolated. Many pressures came on us and yet we did not bend. At the same time, let us keep in mind the fact that we all knew that there is a price of this defiance. Defiance is not a free lunch. Defiance is not something which people will tolerate. Defiance will not be tolerated by those who have arrogance of power. Defiance will not be tolerated by those who are spelling a new world order which is very different from our own vision. Therefore, they try to first degrade us and then pressurise us. Sometimes I have been asking the House, "Please don't bend before pressures." What are the pressures? Pressures in the modern world, in the contemporary era, are never direct. They are never brazen. There is no gunboat diplomacy any more. Nobody sends armies to pressurise. Nobody tell us, "You don't do this, you do that." There are a lot of hidden hands which are working all the time. These hidden hands have only one objective and that one objective is how to first break the unity which the nation exhibited.

How do you do it? You can do it by sapping the morale first. All the time—I have due respect for the media, particularly the electronic media which has a universal and global appeal—we are told that we have done something wrong and we must get out of it. The CTBT issue is not over. The CTBT lays down in the United Nations that there is a three-year period in which we must sign before the "entry into force" clause becomes operative. In these three years several things would happen. One of those things which is happening is dangling of carrots and also the rod and I think, that rod also manifests itself in many forms. Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra was very vocal in this House. I think on his birthday he was more vocal than us. He said that a very great thing happened when India lost the Security Council seat. Why did we lose the Security Council seat? Was it not a punishment? Was it not a rod that was being shown to us? Madam, with you permission, I would like to quote my own speech. While responding to the debate on the CTBT, I said the same thing. On the 26th August, I said:

> "On whether the membership of the Security Council will be threatened or not threatened, I must say, with humility, that I will take all this in its stride. Ultimately, when you have made up your mind, when the nation has made up its mind that it is not going to compromise on such issues, then, whatever comes in our way, we will take and we will take it with dignity."

I must say it is not something that I promised you are going to get. I promised that this would come. I said it in this very House on the 26th August. It is on the record. I repeat it again. At the same time, I said:

> "The media propaganda is coming from outside. And now, in the modern sense, when the electronic media has become so powerful, I think that is where the response cannot come from the Government alone. The response can come from all of us together that we would not let an atmosphere prevail in the country that the media, insider or outsider, can cause confusion in our minds."

After this I don't have to say anything about what I had warned. I had said that if you are taking a stand on the CTBT, then please be ready for these things. I am really sorry to notice sometimes when a man like Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra

and his party and whoever wants to be more dedicated talk in terms of bomb and going nuclear. Yet, on the first shot they are the ones who are buckling. On the first shot there is a loss of seat and the nerves are gone. A nation cannot be defended with weak nerves. Nation's interest needs more courage. Therefore, it is not that when you are fighting a battle, every victory must be yours. It cannot be. I cannot promise it. I can promise only one thing. I will uphold the mandate of this House which you gave me unanimously. Basically, what was the mandate? The mandate was, stand up with dignity. The mandate was, preserve the dignity of the House and its legacy. This Government promised it. It will continue to do so, whether we get a temporary seat or we don't and whether we get a permanent seat or we don't. I do not promise that we would get a permanent seat. I say it again so that it is not discussed again. Efforts are being made to see that India does not get a permanent seat. Such efforts are being made. Several formulae are going around. One such formula is, while Japan and Germany would be admitted, the rest would be seen later. There are three or four formulae going around. Therefore, I am repeating it because this debate would come up again when these powers would stand in the way of our getting a permanent seat. I don't think they would get you seated. I was surprised when a man like Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra said that you may refuse to sign CTBT and you would get a bouquet in your hands and would be asked to sit in the Security Council. This question can be put. I think it was asked validly as to why.....*(Interruptions)*.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (Delhi): I did not say that.....

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: I promise you one thing. Before I conclude my speech, I would answer all the questions. Why did we not withdraw? When you are struggling on something, tactics and strategies vary from time to time. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee made an eloquent speech. He rightly traced the history of how we got into this battle. From the very begining it was a fight against Japan. We knew that it was a powerful nation. From the very beginning we knew that Japan's resources were far larger than ours. That is what he said. I do not have to repeat what he has said. All the same, the preceding Government decided to contest. When we came into office, we were not only half way, but more than three-quarters through. At that time also the preceding Government wrote to me and it is on record that we should not withdraw and I honoured that. Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra is sitting here. I am going to tell him what his leader had told me on telephone three times. He told me, "Don't withdraw, don't withdraw, don't withdraw.' I repeat, this was the voice which was coming from all sides. It is better to fight so that we get counted and we also know who is with us and who is not with us. We offered to the Third World an option of leadership. We are often asked whether India should lead the NAM or whether it should not lead the NAM. Leadership is not contesting elections alone; Leadership is not asking for garlands. Leadership comes at the time of difficulty when you have to stand up. I said this before and I repeat it. How is it that in September only three nations were backing us and when it happened in October, we had 40 nations backing us? Was it not a success? I would like to repeat that three of the five nuclear-power States saw it advantageous to go with us. Cynically, you could dismiss anything. We can be very cynical about it. Please be cynical about me. Please be cynical about this Government. But, for God's sake, do not be cynical about the nation's interest. The nation's interest is above all. Therefore, when we fought the election, we fought with open eyes. The option was not between winning and losing. The option was between withdrawing and contesting. Withdrawal would have meant two things. One, I am sure, Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra's cynicism would have confronted me. Mrs.

Alva is sitting there and smiling with all the cynicism. Mrs. Alva would have told me, "you are a coward. You have run away from fighting the battle. Why did you not contest? We were winning. We had done everything. My leader, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, had told you that we were winning." This would have been the reaction. Let us in all honesty ask ourselves, "Are we telling the truth or are we not telling the truth?"

SHRI RAGHAVJI: The question is not about withdrawing or contesting. The point is that your assessment went wrong. You said that we were winning.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: It is not the question of this House; it is the question of this nation. Some nations had promised us and had said that they saw our point of view. Well, some did not choose to vote with us at the last moment. Some did vote and those people would otherwise, have felt let down. A front was being built and this front was not a momentary shift.

It was not only for elections, but it was a front that we were trying to build for the future, a barricade that we were trying to build.

Shri Pranab Mukherjee had rightly written to me, "don't let then down." I think he was right. When Atalji, for whom I have great regard and whom I hold in great respect, when he was going to New York as the leaer of our delegation—before the voting—I told him, "you judge the situation yourself.' Therefore, I was sorry in a way, at his statement—as Mrs. Alva has said, "A man of his stature should have uttered those words in New York itself." This is not done. I may remind you of Churchill's famous saying. He said, "I never criticise my Government abroad. But I never spare it at home." That is how it should be. That is how democracies are run. About the foreign policy, I would say, we are trying to involve all parties in every forum. In every forum we send a composite delegation.

If we start having a partisan attitude, it will not sustain us. I hope it was a momentary outburst. I do hope Atalji is not very happy about it. Therefore, I would say only one thing. This is not the issue with which we would like to go along with. When you applauded, as I said, on the CTBT, please make up your mind even now and I urge you again. There are still three years to sign the CTBT. If you want to bite carrots you can do it. That option is available even now. It is not yet gone. Is it your advice that I should go and sign? If your advice is not to sign, I hope you will stand with me when the hour of punishment comes. When you were demanding the bombs here and you said we should go nuclear, I think the opposite benches rightly and courageously said, "Even if sanctions come we will stand with you. Even if someone tries to create a bad situation for you we will stand by you."

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: It is not a punishment. It is not because of our not signing it. It is because we did not press our cause in the non-aligned movement.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: I have heard you with respect and I will respond to you. I am, therefore, saying this thing and I repeat that this is a point when the nation must stand unitedly and with dignity. May I mention Madam, an incident. Unfortunately, when the day of polling was there, I was not well, I was in hospital. The news was given to me in hospital. From my hospital bed I sent a circular telegram to all our ambassadors. I said, if it is defeat stand with dignity, that is befitting India. Don't complain and don't go around saying "beaten". This was the advice that I gave to my ambassadors all over the world not because I am a very bold man or a courageous man, more than Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra but because primarily I feel that on such issues we have to stand with dignity and with courage. Several new things are happening. Please keep one thing in mind, the history of the whole thing.

Those who wish India to be pressurised on Kashmir have also been saying several things. I remember, I wrote an article at that time, two years ago one scholar who is respected in America wrote an article and he said, "The road to de-nuclearisation of India passes through Kashmir." And I quoted it. What does it mean? It basically means that you pressurise on Kashmir and this doll will jump up on nuclear policy and compromise. This is not only Kashmir; substitute it also with the Security Council. They will press all buttons to see that you compromise on the nuclear policy that you are pursuing. I would have made a statment today, Madam, about China. And I think my friends have pointed it out. Now since you have not thought it fit that I should make the statement, I hope you will read it. When you read it, you will see what I am trying to say, because Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra has said, "Who said it was historic?" I never said it. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra is a student of history and also of literature. Words matter to him and so do they to me. But one thing which I do not know is, what events are historic and what events are not historic. I think history is such a thing that we can interpret it in our own way as we wish to. But I think one thing has happened. I could have made a statemnt on China immediately after the Chinese President went back from here. I did not. I waited for three more days because I was noting how they behaved when they went to Pakistan. That is why, after I have done that I have come to the House today to make a statement. I will not take your time to elaborate what they have said in Pakistan. Well, if you don't think it is a turning of events, it is for you to decide. If you don't think there is a shift in the policy of China, it is for you to decide. I am quite conscious of the fact that the situtation today is such that our territory is with them. There is no doubt about that. That is why we are trying to discuss with them. There are two options in the world always—either go to war or discuss. And we have chosen for good reasons to discuss. Gradually we are moving in one direction and that direction has not been built by me. It has been built by several people. In 1976, when Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee went to Beijing, he was building that direction also. In 1988, when Shri Rajiv Gandhi went there he gave a turn for the good. Shri Narasimha Rao did the same thing. And now we are trying to do the same thing and that is the real greatness of this country, that with the change of Governments we do not change policies and directions of the policies. That does not mean that we are rigid, that does not mean we are stagnant, that does not mean that we do not take into account all the changes that are coming.

The main postulates of the Government's foreign policy framework are to build a South Asian tradition on the basis of some principles. Some time ago, I had the opportunity to deliver a written lecture in the prestigious Chathem House. There I had spelt out India's position. Madam Vice-Chairman, please permit me to quote a portion of it now.

The UF Government's Neighbourhood Policy now stands on five basic principles. With our neighbourhood, like Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, India does not ask for reciprocity—the hon. Member had asked me if I was including Pakistan, I was not—but gives all that it can in good faith and trust. Secondly, no South Asian country will allow its territory to be used against the interests of another country of the region. Thirdly, none will interfere in the internal affairs of another. Fourthly, all South Asian countries must respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Fifthly, and finally, they will settle all their disputes through peceful, bilateral negotiations. These five principles, if scrupulously observed, will, I am sure, recast South Asia's regional relatinship, including the tormented relatinship between India and Pakistan, in a friendly, co-operative mode. These are the basics on which, in my own humble way, I have been trying to build India's neighbour-

hood policy. And we are succeeding. I think one of the India's success stories will come before this House soon, in a couple of days, when we are able to sort out our difficulties in talking to Bangladesh. I think there can be a turning point and I don't want to preempt the discussions. Then I will come to the House, perhaps some time next week, when we sort out our difficulties with Bangladesh.

A point was raised by some friends: Why did Jyoti Basu go to Bangladesh? I said in the House and I want to repeat that Mr. Jyoti Basu did not go to negotiate a treaty. Mr. Basu had not negotiated any treaty. Mr. Jyoti Basu had not finalised any arrangement. I think it is a great strength of India that in this democratic system, we use all parties, all our forces, whenever we need in a particular given situation. Why do we send Atal Behari Vajpayeeji time and again to the United Nations? Why was I sent to various UN Human Rights Conferences in Geneva? It is primarily because we feel that when the question of nation comes, we are all one. If Jyoti Basu's going to Bangladesh could help us in smoothening differences, why not? If tommorrow I need Mr. Karunanidhi to go to Sri Lanka to help us sort out our problems, I will do that. Similarly, if tomarrow I feel Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra's going to Nepal could be useful, I will use him. When I say, 'I will use him', I mean the nation will use him because I am nobody. Therefore, kindly do not think in terms of a partisan sense when we think in terms of sending our people out. We are all Indians. We are all patriots. We are all committed to India's interests and, therefore, we all have to act together. In the House, we may differ. Here I am reminded of the famous dialogue in the Mahabharata— outside, we are 105 and that 105 is our strength. Therefore, there is no issue in Mr. Jyoti Basu's going to Bangladesh. The Indian foreign policy is going to make a step further. I am glad to tell you that on the 18th this month, all the SAARC Foreign Ministers will be meeting here to dicuss as to how we can go further on SAPTA, SAFTA and on other political questions. We will discuss with them because India is SAARC Chairman this year. I think it will take us one step further. I think SAPTA has made progress. The vision of SAFTA is before us. I did not construct SAPTA or SAFTA. The credit goes to the previous Government. But that credit goes to India. Therefore, I will not disown it because Mr. Manmohan Singh did it. I am going to own it because India needs it. I am going to take that as my historic duty. If I may use the word 'historic', that is my historic duty to take India's foreign policy one step further and that is what we are trying to do. The other dimension of today's regional cooperation is that we do not think of the region in terms of the geographic proximity only. We think of it in a wider sense.

It is the good luck of India and again by the previous Government's efforts, that we were able to have the full dialogue partnership with the countries on the other side, the ASEAN countries. I had the fortune of going to Jakarta as a arepresentative of India to participate for the first time in that dialogue and also in the dialogue of the ARF. Well, I think it is interesting and here I may tell you one think — this is of interest to you, Madam — and that is that — although we feel that when some forum is formed and we are not admitted to it, it is very sad — in that forum in July this year, England and France were applicants for entry into the ARF, their applications were rejected. But that does not mean that England and France had ceased to be world powers, that does not mean that they ceased to be great. This is somethins which is happening the world over. We are also trying to build our regional cooperation. We are trying to work closely with, as I said, he ASEN countries and the A.R.F. On the other side, we are constructing what we call our relationship in the Indian Ocean region, 14 countries of Indian Ocean region starting from Australia, touching Africa, including two countries of

ASEAN. We are going to meet in March this year in mauritius and give it a shape. It is very interesting for me to see that these 14 nations' combination that is coming up trying to build a common association. There are atlease 14 nations waiting outside wanting to enter. That is the sort of scene because the concept of cooperation is now different. We are also trying to build a cooperation — again I would say this thing — with Central Asia. Central Asia has been a always historically a part of the Indian strategy also and a part of the Indian region always. If I may use the word historic again and that historic word is this, that we have been together and we see the challenges to the Central Asian countries and one such challenge was what happened in Afghanistan. This effort is to create a new situation regarding central Asia. Last year, Madam, and I wrote about it at that time sitting on those benches, the Pressler law was modified or suspended for one—time help to Pakistan. I am not discussing that. At that time, before the Senate Committee, the authority on behalf of the State Department, told the Senate Committee that they were trying to go to Pakistan with those arms and they wanted to forget their nuclear pursuits primarily because they had a strategic interest — why — becasue they were helping them in Afghanistan. What were they helped for? What were they trying to achieve? If this is what the evidence is of what is happening today when Taliban have come, who are helping the Taliban? Taliban were not born from the skies. They went from some country. They were trained in some country. They acquired arms from some country. They have been sustained by some countries. And those countries' names. I do not want to repeat. I think they are in the vision of all of us. We know who is doing it. And this time India had to stand up. I know this thing for quite some time now. India's sand in this situation has been different, not due to the fault of ours but the events moved that way. And now I think, and I am glad that my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, is sitting here; he came to my rescue when I was not well and he went to Tehran to attend the first conference held there regarding Afghanistan. I must thank him publicly because the role that he played was very commendable and I think he upheld India's tradition. That also helps us in another way, that the foreign policy projection is not the monopoly of the Foreign Minister. All of us have to do it. And that is now we succeed and that is what Mishraji did for us. What happened there? How does it happen that Pakistan which was so close an ally of Iran — it was trying to get Iran on its side all these years — at that time Pakistan tried its best that India should not be invited, and yet India was invited? It did not happen as a miracle. Things don't happen as miracles. And if you don't want to give me the credit, don't give it, but give this country the credit that our policy has succeeded in this context, that not only we have gone there, also today a very interesting think has happened. When UNDP decided to call another conference in Peshawar, at that time again Pakistan cancelled the conference because India was invited and the UNDP chose to get the conference cancelled rather than cancelling invitation to India.

That is our relevance. Those friends talked to me about Pakistan Policy — Pakistan Policy has to come slightly later as well, but at this stage, let me say only one thing. My Pakistan Policy is not polemical but, if in Iran we have succeeded, in this we are trying; Pakistan was trying to isolate us but is getting itself isolated. If this is not Pakistan Policy, I don't know, what else Pakistan policy can be. That is why when Benazir Bhutto, the former Prime Minister spoke in the United Nations, I did not respond to her. I did not want to enter into polemical problems because that does not help. That was only a sheer show. But, I think, soon in three weeks she saw our hand and that hand was expressed in Tehran by my friend, Mishraji. That was India and that will be India all the time.

My friend had talked at length about Afghanistan, the time he spent there. How many months, Biplab? You spent three years?

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal) : Two months.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : You saw a lot of it. I also saw some part of it, but you saw more of it. I compliment you for that. But, things are changing there. Today, unfortunately, due to outside intervention, that nation is being split. That is why we want that nation to stay united. We don't want outside intervention in that country. All those who want to help Afghanistan should give help in terms of money, in terms of medicines and in terms of food. That is the real help, and India does it. India has done its best. India countinues to do its best. Please don't ask us to count how much we have done. That will be very uncharitable on my part and that will be very unethical on my part to talk all that. I can assure this House that we have done our best.

Another dimension of Indian Policy, as I was mentioning just now, is the Indian Ocean Dream in which South Africa ...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Karnataka) : But it took you two weeks to condole the public hanging of the former President of Afghanistan. You took 15 days to realise what was happening there. It was very tragic.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : I would come to that also. I have one impression about my friend, Margaret Alva, and that impression is, when papers are sent to her, she reads them. I think, I was wrong. I think, Papers were sent to each member, giving in chronological order as to what happened in Afghanistan, when and how we responded. Whtihin 24 hours of this, I was speaking in Chicago, on record, and I sent it. If the Indian Foreign Minister speaking elsewhere is not India's Policy, you think bureaucrats speaking here are a expression of better policy... *(Interruptions)* ...You may not accept it, and every lady has a right not to accept, and I agree with you. But the main point, basically, is within 24 hours of this dastardly happening, we constantly kept a policy. And also, if a statement matters more, that is a different think. Statements were also made. I spoke in Chicago, I spoke in the United Naions, on record, within six days of that and then we made a statement here and followed on. I have already passed on that paper to all the hon. Members, in a chronological order. When one newspaper writes, you draw inspiration from that.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA : Gujralji, I have some problem with the chronological order. I have gone through the paper. I don't know whether Alvaji has read it or not. I have read it very throughly. What it gives is this. On 27th, the murder took place. On 6th October, you made a speech in the United Nations. There is no mention of your speech in Chicago, and in any case, your speech was not carried in the Press. It was the duty of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to communicate it to the rest of the world. That was not done. The only message that we got was that you were watching the situation and all that.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : Not at all. I think my hon. friend is an economist. I think, English was not your subject. I would suggest, you read it again.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : I don't think such remarks are called for, Gujral Saheb. He reads as much as you do. His English may not be as good as yours. These comments are not called for. English is not our mother-tongue. It may not be as good as yours.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA : When I talked to you, if you remember, you mentioned about the 1st October speech. Kindly circulate that speech.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : I will. On 28th I spoke, not on the 1st 28th is the incident, and within 24 hours, I was speaking in Chicago. I will circulate them.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA : That has not been circulated.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL : It has not been circulated? I will cirlculate it to you.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: So, it is not the fault of my English. It is some fault with the office. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: But, anyhow, to assure this House, we have condemened that ghastly act. This was something about which the United Nations have a responsiblity. Najibullah and his brother were under the protection of the UN. It was the UN's duty to protect...

SHRI K.R. MALKANI (Delhi): Could you not have intervened in time to save his life? You could have done something about it. Najibullah and his brother who were murdered were our friends. Our friends are murdered and we are helpless.

श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल: मैंने सुना नहीं मलकानी जी। ज़रा फिर से कहिए।

श्री के॰ आर॰ मलकानी: मैंने कहा कि मुजीब साहब का भी मर्डर हो गया था।

He was a good friend of India. He was allowed to be shot. When a good friend is shot we are helpless, not able to do anything either way. Could you not have saved him?

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: I would only say this thing. Up till now I was being asked whether India reacted or not. Now my friend, Mr. Malkani, says...

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Action is more important than reacting.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: I do not know what his concept of action is.

SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Saving lives.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: If Tehran meeting was not action, if New York meeting was not action, and if the forthcoming meeting in Turkemenistan is not action, then what more can be action? Surely my friend, Mr. Malkani, is not advising me to order armies to fly into Afghanistan. Therefore, the main point I am trying to make is that we have reacted.

श्री के॰ आर॰ मलकानी: बीजू पटनायक सुकानो को बचा कर ले आया था।

We could have done something but we did not try.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: Well, next time I will try with you!

SHRI ASHOK MITRA (West Bengal): Mr. Minister, you are also retroactively responsible for the murder of John F. Kennedy on the 23rd December, 1963. That is the moral from what has been just stated?

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: I am responsible for every murder in the world! Madam, I was saying a while ago that we have a great deal of reasons to be proud of our cooperation with South Africa. Presently, the Deputy President of South Africa is visiting us and we have signed some agreements with him. South Africa is also a part of the Indian Ocean Rim countries and a part of NAM. May I take this House into confidence that yesterday I had the privilege of talking to the Deputy President? He reiterated his firm faith in the NAM movement and he said that they wanted to invite the next NAM summit in South Africa. NAM must never be looked at, as I said, in terms of those that Western powers want us to look at. I would only like to say this thing about Bangladesh. I have said something and I need not state more here because next week we will be able to, God willing, sort out our difficutlies, if there are any, and I think, a new chapter will open.

I now talk those points which my friends have taken during the debate itself.

Mr. V.K. Malhotra, for whose eloquence I have already paid a compliment, has talked about two things which, I think, I have repeated. One of course, was whether China visited was historic or not, Well, call it anything you like. We have not built any euphoria. We have not gone to town to say that something great has happened. We did

definitely recognise and, I feel, that some new additions have been made in our relationship towards positivity and a new relationship that can help our security in the future. If for anything else kindly understand one thing: along the Line of Actual Control we have approximately, from the Indian side, about 11 divisions deployed and you can imagine for yourself the cost of retaining and sustaining 11 divisions and if you are able to thin them out. I do not know to what extent you may agree ultimately, but whatever we did, I think, it is to India's advantage. This was the vision of Rajiv Gandhi in 1988 and also the vision of Narasimha Rao when he went there and we are sustaining that and, therefore, that is the line that we are taking. My friend, Mr. Malhotra, had also asked me about Vajpayee's visit. I think, I have already repeated that. His visit in 1977 or 1978 to China was also in the same context and , therefore, I hope, that was historic, if this was not. *(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: It was historic that he came back because China attacked Vietnam. He came back.

[The Vice-Chairman (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA) in the Chair]

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: My friend, Mr. Malhotra, has also asked me about the misbehaviour against our bureacrats in Pakistan. His resentment, his anger is justified because we are dealing with a society or a country which, unfortunately, does not know even how to behave with diplomats. They were the ones who learnt the American Embassy; they were the ones who killed two American diplomats in karachi. They misbehaved with us; they misbehaved even with the Egyptians. Their ethos, their diplomatic ethos—if I may say so and I need not use stronger words, but I would say this thing — is reprehensible, if not more. I can assure you one thing, that we will try to do something if they do not behave properly. I hope the norms and conduct of diplomacy of the Vienna Convention will be observed. I think all other points which he has raised, have already replied to. He also talked about Bangladesh and why Mr. Jyoti Basu went there. I have already dealt with that point.

My friend, Pranab Mukherjee, to whom I am thankful—as you people put it he has done my job because he was able to correct the perspective of the entire discussion; I am thankful to him because he has done my job—has also asked me whether we explained our position regarding CTBT. Yes. I myself wrote to every Foreign Minister of the world twice. We also instructed our Ambassadors to go to their Foreign Offices and explain. When I was meeting 20 odd Foreign Ministers in Jakarta and nearly 80 in New York, I was not talking about Security Council so much as I was talking about the CTBT. Even now when the Deputy President of South Africa is visiting us, I will try to explain to him because they had a view different from ours on the CTBT. The sustained campaign, which has to be sustained by India, does not end here because, as I have just now said, three years are still there. Therefore, in these years, we have to sustain this. He has also said that we should redefine the role of NAM. I will, because the post-cold war era has to be redefined. I hope in March this year or in early April, when the NAM Foreign Ministers, are meeting in india, we will be able to do it. I think it is a great opportunity for India to play a role at that time because I think 118 countries are likely to attend that Conference. I think we will be able to do this. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee has also asked me about reciprocity with Pakistan. I have already clarified that in my address in London also that I was talking about other countries except that country. There is some difficulty about that. About Bangladesh, Pranab Mukherjee's point of view is totally valid. I can go with that completely. He has also asked whether we are thinking in terms of replenishment. Yes. Please do not ask me to spell it out. I think in the course of next the week when we are arriving at

some understanding, I will be able to spell out at greater length this dimension of replenishment also.

My friend Biplab has raised all the issues. I think I do not have to repeat what I have said. But I am only saying this thing about the Soviet entry into Afghanistan which he has explained. At that time I was Ambassador of India in Moscow. ....*(Interruptions)*...

Well, it is no use because you are a professor. You can write a book. But I am not a professor and I need not theorise all the past. But I can only say that I wish it did not happen and if it had not happened, the histroy of the world might have been different. But the history is also full of 'its' and 'buts'. If this had not happened and whatever else had happened, it is a different thing.

If Margaret, my dear old friend—I do not know what more to say because I not only hold her in esteem but I also have affection for her and this affection is two generations old, and, Madam, the seat on which you are sitting, her mother-in-law used to sit and we learnt a lot from her; therefore, this relationship between Margaret and me is of two generations, if I may say so—gets angry, then I am worried. Yesterday Margaret got angry why we lost our UN seat. Her anger may be all right because I may not have come up to her expectations.

But, I can only assure you and assure her that I will try again to come up and win back her esteem. I think I have already explained the contours of the Security Council and what we can do and what we cannot do for a permanent seat. Margaret has made suggestions regarding a Policy Planning Unit. I can promise her that this is something which should have been done much earlier. I do not think I would take months now; I will take only a few days before this comes into operations. I had been sitting on those benches and I had been suggesting to Shri Narasimha Rao about the National Security Council. Again I promise that we are going to do it sooner than we expect. Therefore, that is something which is part of my own thinking. I do agree that no foreign policy, security policy of a country can be constructed without this institutional back-up. For quite long we have done the mistake of depending either on the structured bureaucracy or on the whims or on the wills or on the faculties of one individual minister or the other, Margaret, in the year 1990 when I had the privilege of occupying this seat, we had also set up a Security Council. I do not want to blame anybody. I do not want to go into the history. Unfortunately, that was abolished. We have to reconstruct it again. We have also learnt some fault points of that scheme. We try to correct them now when we come to it. And I only say this and I agree with Margaret, that political leadership is not assertion of a point; political leadership should have a vision; only then it can assert, political leadership has to have a commitment; then only it can assert and no political leadership means, 'individuals,' it means, 'institutionalisation' and that is why I am moving towards institutionalisation so that we are able to project India, project not only because we publish more pamphlets or we send more people outside. Ultimately, kindly keep in mind the fact, that India's strength and weaknesses will get projected by the policies that we follow. No lobbies can do it. If we are on our knees, no amount of propaganda will help us. If we have the courage to stand on our feet, I think, we will be in a position and will be taken a note of, as it has been done now. My friend, Shri Devi Prasadji has made certain points. I will not refer to those points where he agreed with me, but I will only refer to one point which he asked me that why proper consultation was not there between the political parties. I have been in this office for six months now and I can say that I have done far more of consultation with the political parties than any of my predecessors, including myself in my last assignment have done. There is no

movement in the Foreign Office of the Government of India where either I have not personally talked to the leaders or not written to them. I have sent them and kept them well documented and now, when friends in the Congress Party are building a unit for foreign policy and Shri Pranab Mukherjee is heading it, I hope, those documents are used. If they want more information, then I will always give them. I do not think that foreign policy is my monopoly. I think it is something which we all appreciate.

Then, Fernandes has raised a very correct point and asked "What do you mean by 'review of policy?'" Well, I think, if constructing a new policy regarding Bangladesh is not a review of policy, then I do not know what a 'review' is. If I say, going to that side and building a new type of regional cooperation which we spell out is not a 'review', then I do not know what a 'review' is. If our going to Tehran and building new types of relationships is not called a 'review', then I do not know what else could be called a 'review.' If our taking a stand on CTBT is not a 'review', then what else can be a 'review?' Review does not mean that I should sit in my office and write a thesis. Review is an everyday affair in foreign affairs because we react to events, we react to what is happening, sometimes adequately, sometimes not so adequately. because we are human being, we have our failures also and what is where I need your support and understanding. Once you give us that, it will be much easier. Professor Naunihal Singh is sitting there. We have a very interesting and a very good relationship. I value that relationship. When I was hearing him. I was reminded of that good old Hindi saying:

"सारी रात रामायण सुनते रहे, सुबह पूछा कि सीता और राम का रिश्ता क्या था"

He asked me as to why we did not discuss the border issue with China. What else was discussed? What else was discussed when arriving at confidence building measures? What is the agreement about? His question was: 'why we did not discuss the border issue?' Madam, I will leave it at that.

He has also asked me to snap diplomatic relations with Pakistan. That is not a correct approach. Even in 1962 when we had that unfortunate incident in relation to China, we did not close our embassy. Embassies, basically, are our ears and eyes. They are more important in adverse circumstances than in helpful circumstances. It is very easy for me to withdraw and bring everyone back home and keep them at safe distances from very difficult sports. But I will not do that. I would say that where the circumstances are difficult, our missions must be there.

Shri Vayalar Ravi asked me—he is not here—whether we had raised with China the issue of arms supply to Pakistan. Yes; I did. Now, it is known what their reply would be. I would only say this. This, I think, is something which I must say. It is that there is no issue which is in your mind and which could have been raised with China which remained unspelt. We had raised. But don't please ask me to give you the details; what did I say and what reply did I get. This would be something which would harm future diplomacy. I do not think I should do it.

My friend, Dr. Dutta, is here. He is a very remarkable man. I discovered his talent the other day, which I am happy about.

He asked me whether we have decided; whether we will go nuclear or not. We preserve our options. I think It means a lot. Is it not? If it does not mean a lot, the pressure would not be on us. But don't ask me as to when we will do so. That is not for me to decide. This is something to be decided by those who have the responsibility in regard to the strategy of the country. It is to be decided by those who have the responsibility of assessing the threat from time to time. Weapons of any type to be

built or not built, to be aquired or not acquird—should be left to them. I think if we start discussing this in advance, possibly, the type of relationship that we are trying to determine between ourselves and the Defence forces would be affected. I do not say more than that.

In regard to Bangladesh, I would only say this. You have asked me whether we have stopped the Chakmas and all that. When I visited Bangladesh, I discussed this. The response was very positive and helpful. I think that is the real essence of our relationship with new Government in Bangladesh. It is that on issues of contention, we are trying to find areas of agreement; we are trying to find areas of co-operation. I think once we are able to work out the water arrangement, that would be the biggest boost to our relationship. In that context, I would say, the other things—I am not spelling them out here, deliberately—would get sorted out themselves.

About your point on policy planning unit, I have already said. In regard to operational research, I would only say this. It is a very good point. I take it in the sense and in the spirit in which you have made it. I will see that I use it.

With these words, Madam, may I thank all my colleagues, all my friends, for the patience with which they have listened to me? Thank you.

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया (बिहार): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदया, विदेशी मंत्री महोदय ने बहुत अच्छा वक्तव्य रखा, सारे सवालों का जवाब दिया। किन्तु मैं सदन के रिकॉर्ड के लिए आपसे गुज़रिश करूंगा कि उनके भाषण की दो चीज़ें सदन के रिकॉर्ड से निकाल दी जाएं। एक तो उन्होंने यह कहा कि डा० बिप्लव दासगुप्त को अंग्रेज़ी नहीं आती और दूसरा डा० नौनिहाल सिंह को जो उन्होंने कहा कि सारी रात रामायण सुनी और सुबह पूछा कि राम और सीता का रिश्ता क्या था। यह बड़ा ही अभद्र है, इसलिए दोनों चीज़ों को सदन के रिकॉर्ड से निकाल दें।

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Mr. Ahluwalia, let us take it in a lighter vein. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: I know you are a sober man ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: What he meant was that I did not read the document. He was absolutely wrong. I read the document. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: He said that he did not know English. *(Interruptions)*

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: He did not mean that. *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: He said English was not his strong point. *(Interruptions)*

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: We have a relationship...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I am not disputing. I am not creating any fight between you and Mr. Gujral. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: He knows that I meant no insult. He knows that I meant no affront. *(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA): Now we will take up the Agriculture Minister's statement on the drought situation in Orissa.

PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, he has made cheap remarks... ..*(Interruptions)*

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्रीमती कमला सिन्हा): नौनिहाल सिंहजी, आप कृपा करके बैठिए और सदन की अनुमति हो तो मैं सैयद सिब्ते रज़ी जी को आमंत्रित करती हूं चेयर पर बैठने के लिए।

श्री० एस० एस० अहलुवालिया: अब उठा दीजिए। अब तो कोई बिजिनेस है नहीं।

[उपसभाध्यक्ष (सैयद सिब्ते रज़ी) पीठासीन हुए]

आज इसको नहीं रखा जाए, दूसरे किसी दिन रखा जाए।

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Sir, I agree with Mr. Ahluwalia. It is about six o'clock now and we are all exhausted—there was a lot of discussion and a lot of friction also.

प्रो० विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा: इसको किसी और दिन ले लिया जाए। यह इम्पारटेंट सब्जेक्ट है।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SYED SIBTEY RAZI): Mr. Minister, what is your response?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): Tomorrow is Friday.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SYED SIBTEY RAZI): Then it will go to Monday and then, may be, it will be scuttled. I have a suggestion: If Members go in for brief clarifications and cut it by half...

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): We will take it up tomorrow...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: ...after Private Members' business.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SYED SIBTEY RAZI): I feel the sense of the House is that the House should be adjourned. I adjourn the House till 11 a.m. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at fifty-seven minutes past five of the clock, till eleven of the clock on Friday, the 6th December 1996.